A PLAIN

Path-Way Opened

TO THE

SIMPLE-HEARTED,

For the Anſwering all

DOUBTS and OBJECTIONS

Which do ariſe in them againſt the *Light* and *Truth* in the *Inward Parts*; by which many are kept from *Obedience*, and ſo from *Peace* to their panting Souls.

By STEPHEN CRISP.

To which is Added,

An INVITATION from the SPIRIT of CHRIST.

By HUMPHRY SMITH.

BRISTOL:

Printed by SAM. FARLEY, near the *White Hart*, in the *Old Market*, 1747.

A
Plain PATH-WAY
OPENED, &c.

FRIENDS *and* PEOPLE,

I Have had a deep Exerciſe upon my Spirit, concerning many who are come to feel ſomething ſtirring and moving in their Hearts, (that is good) to bring them into a ſerious Conſideration of their Courſe of Life, and the inward State of their immortal Souls: And when you have ſometimes begun to turn your Minds to this good Thing that ſtirred in you, then have many Doubts and Objections ariſen in you, leſt you ſhould be *miſ-led*, *deceived* or *deluded*; and leſt this Thing, that inwardly ſtrives with you, ſhould *lead you into the Erroneous Way of the* Quakers, (as the World's Teachers call it) for they ſpeak, and write of, and bear a conſtant Teſtimony to ſomething that is in Man, that calls upon him to Repent, and to turn to the LORD; and under this very Notion that ye have heard Evil, and thought evil of that People, by the ſame Rule you are apt to think evil of that which works in your own Boſoms to lead you out of Sin and Iniquity; and ſo ye are tempted to ſlight it, and to get ſome ſlight Name for it, to call it by, which Antichriſt's Miniſters have many to afford you; as to call it, *a Natural Light*; *a Common Gift of the Spirit*, but *not a Saving Gift*; *Conviction of a Natural Conſcience*; *a Legal Work*; yea, and many call it, *the Devil's Work to diſturb the Soul of its Peace*; and ſome, *a Diabolical Light*, &c. And thus when thou art brought to ſlight that good Principle, (that ſtrives with thee) under ſome ſuch Name, thou getteſt Eaſe again for a little while,

and takeſt Liberty to act againſt it, and to do and ſay that which this Principle doth in ſecret condemn; and then it riſeth again, and breaks thy Peace, and brings Trouble and Anguiſh upon thy Soul: And then up come many Doubts on the one Hand, and Doubts on the other Hand, and thy poor Soul is beſet and encompaſſed with Doubts, and Fears, and Jealouſies; ſometimes thou feareſt thou withſtandeſt the Truth to thy own *Deſtruction*, and ſometimes feareſt again, it is a *Deluſion*, and thou ſhalt be deceived; and beſides, thou findeſt many learned Men, and worldly-wiſe Men that tell thee, that there is nothing *good* in thee; and here thou art in a great Straight, and laboureſt under many ſorrowful Thoughts, and many doubtful Diſputations ariſe in thy Mind; the Fleſh now ſtrongly warreth againſt that which comes to diſturb it, and the Spirit ſtrongly warreth againſt that which reſiſts and rebels againſt it, and theſe Two are contrary, and theſe contrary Things are both in thee, and thou poor Creature muſt feel the Struggling of them both; and by reaſon of thy Darkneſs, and Doubts, and Fears, thou ſcarce knoweſt (or at leaſt with Certainty) which is *right*: Now, in this State and Condition, how acceptable would a Meſſenger be, one of a Thouſand, to ſhew unto ſuch a one that which might deliver his Soul from going down into the Pit, and ſave his Life from the Deſtroyer? (*Job* xxxiii. 23.) And truly very many are in this ſtraightned State in theſe Days; for whoſe Sakes I am drawn into a deep Exerciſe many Times, by Day, and by Night, and my Cry to God is, that his glorious Power may more and more ariſe to open theſe Doors that are ſhut and folded upon many ſuch, and to bring forth the impriſoned Spirits out of the Priſon-houſe, and out of the Bondage of this ſpiritual *Egypt*, where our Lord was and is crucified *ſpiritually*; and that he may expel the Clouds of Darkneſs, in which the Fears, and Doubts, and Queſtionings ariſe; and that he may make a clear Way in all ſuch for his *Light* to break forth out of Obſcurity, in which the Anſwer to thoſe *Doubts* and *Queſtions* doth ariſe.

And

And by that ſame Spirit that labours with you, am I moved to ſend this for unto you all, as a Word of *Exhortation* and *Counſel* in the Name and Fear of the LORD GOD, by which, as many as do rightly receive it, and make a true Uſe and Proof of it, ſhall find Help and Benefit, and ſhall know the Mouth of the Queſtioner ſtopped, and the Anſwer of Peace witneſſed to their immortal Souls, in the LORD's due Time. And therefore, conſider this, *That every good and perfect Gift cometh from above, from the Father of Lights and Spirits*, who would not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he ſhould turn and live; and therefore hath he, out of his infinite Love, and tender Mercies to the Sons of Men, prepared a Way to draw nigh unto them, even while they are in their Sins, which he doth not but through JESUS CHRIST, the Mediator of the New Covenant, whom he hath freely given to be a *Light* unto the dark World, and that he ſhould *Enlighten every one that cometh into the World*, John i. 9. of which Number thou art one, whoever thou art, and art enlightned by CHRIST, though thou be yet Darkneſs in thy ſelf, as the *Epheſians* once were; yet the *Light* ſhineth in thy Darkneſs, or elſe there would not be two contrary Natures and Seeds found working in thee as there are, and this *Light*, wherewith thou art enlightned, is the *Life of* JESUS, *John* i. 4. which he hath given a Ranſom for Man, and that was not *natural*, as ſome fooliſhly imagine; for if it were natural, it could not be a Ranſom for Man out of Sin; for the Sin to be natural, and that which reproves it natural, is contrary to the Apoſtle, who ſaid, they Two that warred in the Creature were contrary; and called the one *Fleſh*, or *natural*, and the other *Spirit*, or *ſpiritual*; and CHRIST JESUS called that which ſhould reprove the World of Sin, *The Spirit of Truth*; and Antichriſt and his Miniſters call it, *A Natural Inſufficient Light*, &c. But know this, thou that art enquiring, *That that in thee which doth make manifeſt Things to thee that are reproveable, that is the* Light *wherewith* CHRIST JESUS *hath enlightned thee withal*, as the Apoſtle of CHRIST ſaid in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*.

Chap. v. 13, 14. and that Principle which leads thee to do or ſay ſuch Things as thou art ſecretly reproved for in thine own Conſcience, that is the *Darkneſs*, and the Enemy of thy Soul's Peace, which whoever walks in doth not know whither he goeth; for this doth miniſter a Peace and Pleaſure to thee, and a Delight to thy carnal Mind for a Seaſon; yet the other, to wit, the *Light*, the *Reprover*, hath Power to take away Peace from thee again, and to judge thee, and to make that which was ſweet to thee to become bitter; and the Darkneſs, nor Luſt, nor Vanity of thy Mind, cannot deliver thee from this Stroke.

Now, that thou mighteſt be reſolved in ſuch a State *what to do*, conſider, thou that haſt theſe Strugglings in thee about the *Light* in thy Conſcience, whether it be true or no, or whether thou ſhalt own it or no, and art thinking in thy ſelf what is beſt for thee to do, whether to go on ſtoutly againſt it, or to ſubmit to it: I ſay conſider, if thou rebelleſt againſt it, thou canſt never know whither it would lead thee; as it was ſaid of old, *Job* xxiv. *They that rebel againſt the* Light, *they know not the Way of it.* So that if thou doſt take that Courſe to rebel, that will but increaſe thy Ignorance of the Way that the *Light* leads in, and make it more terrible to thee every Time it doth appear in thee, till thou comeſt to that State ſpoken of, *Job* xxiv. 17. *That the Dawning of the Day will be as the Shadow of Death*: For the more thou rebelleſt againſt it, the more dark thou wilt daily grow, and ſo the leſs able to reſolve thy ſelf in thoſe doubtful Things that fill thy Mind; but as Darkneſs increaſeth in thee, ſo the Power of it will bind thee down as a Chain, and Smother every good Deſire in thee; and thus by Rebellion againſt the *Light*, do ſome Men loſe the very Senſe and Knowledge of it, and grow paſt Feeling, and Strangers to it, though *it be in them*; for the Cuſtom of Sin taketh away the Senſe and the Feeling of the Burthen of it. But to you I write that are not yet come to this State of Hardneſs of Heart, but are brought daily into a Senſe of the Burthen of Sin; and that are ready to ſay, *If you were but ſure that was the* Truth *and Way of*

God *which* ſhews *you your Sin, you would follow it, and love it, and own it*, but are kept off by Doubts and Queſtionings: Verily I ſay unto you, before theſe Doubts be reſolved, you muſt try this (as to your Sorrow you have tried the other) before you can be effectually informed; for Arguments will not do ſufficiently in this Caſe; therefore try and prove what this Principle can do for thee, when thou obeyeſt it, which ye know hath Power to condemn you, and break your Peace when you diſobey it: Why ſhould you always be ſhut up in Unbelief, and in Doubts, and ſo kept from trying and proving the *Light*, as well as ye have proved the *Darkneſs*, that ſo ye might reap the Fruit of it to Salvation, as well as you have done the Fruit of the other unto Condemnation? Oh, dear People! conſider, ye cannot obey this *Light* of Christ Jesus in your Conſciences, but by taking up a daily Croſs to your own Wills, Luſts, and Affections; for that is contrary thereunto; and that which leads to obey your Luſts, leads to diſobey the *Light*, and that which leads to obey the *Light*, that croſſeth the *Luſts* and vile Affections which are at Enmity with the *Light*, and muſt by it be judged and condemned; and that which leads thee to ſlight it, and call it by ſome ſlighly Name, that is alſo an Enemy to it, and muſt be judged by it; and ſo as the *Light* comes to rule over thoſe Things in thee, which are Enemies to it, thou wilt know that it will lead thee contrary to thy corrupt Nature; and as thou feeleſt the Thing ſo in thy ſelf, thou wilt come to be wiſer than thoſe Teachers that have called it *a Natural Light*; for that which is Natural leadeth according to Nature, but that which is Spiritual, leadeth according to the Spirit, which the Apoſtle ſaid, *was contrary to the Fleſh, and warred againſt it*. And ſo that Objection will, by thy obeying the *Light*, come to be anſwered, far better than Words, and Arguments could have anſwered it; and ſo likewiſe the Sufficiency of the *Light* thou wilt come to feel, if thou doſt not oppoſe it, but giveſt up to be guided by it; and wilt know that it is able to deliver thee when thou art tempted, as well as to judge thee when thou haſt yielded to the Tempter: For thou

knowest already, that it is able to condemn thee when thou ſinneſt againſt it; but thou canſt not certainly know it ſufficient to give Peace, and to juſtify, till thou obeyeſt it. So then, the *plain Path-way* to the anſwering thy Doubts about the Principle of *Truth* in the inward Parts, is by obeying of it, and yielding to it; for they that do Evil, they grow into Hatred againſt it, and it judges them; as they deny to obey the *Light*, ſo the *Light* denies to juſtify them, and ſo coming juſtly under the Condemnation of it, by reaſon of Tranſgreſſion they grow afraid of it. But alas! this doth but prove that it is ſent of God, for it doth God's Work, which is Righteous; *for to juſtify the Wicked, and to condemn the Righteous, both theſe are an Abomination to the* Lord; and ſo it is with his Witneſs in thy own Conſcience, which God hath placed there to bear witneſs for him, concerning all thy Actions, whether they are Good or Evil; and thou thy ſelf, whoever thou art, whether High or Low, Rich or Poor, Profeſſor or Prophane, ſhalt confeſs unto this, "*That* "this hath never condemned thee for that which was "Good, nor born Witneſs againſt thee for that thou "waſt not guilty of."

And therefore all you that have been hurried and toſſed with Doubts and Queſtionings about the *Truth*, come hearken to the Counſel of God, at this Time once more ſounded forth unto you, from his Spirit, by a Servant of his without you, and anſwered by the Meaſure of his good Spirit within you, which hath the ſame Voice and Cry in you, *for Obedience to what is made* manifeſt *of* God *in you*: Obey the *Light*, and ye ſhall ſee daily more of it, till it breaks forth as a Morning unto thee, and till it ſhines unto a perfect Day; yea, a Day of Gladneſs and rejoicing to thy poor diſtreſſed Soul.

Oh! arise thou that ſitteſt ſorrowing, and thou that art crying out in ſecret, becauſe of the Bonds and Fetters that are yet upon thee! ariſe, ariſe, I ſay, in the Name of the Lord God of *Sion*, who draws nigh to thee by his quickning Spirit, and hearken to his Voice, who ſaith to the Priſoner *Come forth*; and to

the

the bowed down *Ariſe*; and to the feeble Ones *Put on Strength, and follow me, and obey me: I will confound your Foes, and break the Strength of your Enemies, as I have done for my People, who have forſaken all to follow me; and obey me, ſo will I do for you: And if ye in Uprightneſs walk before me, and keep my Covenant, as they have done, no Power or Strength of the Enemy within or without ſhall be too hard for you.* And when the LORD doth thus ariſe in your Souls, and ſtirs up his pure Witneſs, and his Arm awakens in you, and his pure *Light* breaks forth; Oh! what Conſolation is it to you, and how have many of you ſeen your vain Doubtings expelled, and a clear Convincement hath prevailed upon your Spirits concerning the Way of GOD; and at ſuch a Time you have begun to *reſolve* to follow the LORD in his pure Way of Holineſs, thus opened to you in the *Light*, though to the Loſs of all; and though it be to the bearing your Part of the great Reproach that lies upon them that love him more than their Lives; and at ſuch a Time there was felt a ſecret Joy in a hidden Ground in your Souls, and the Seed of the Kingdom, that had been long buried, began to ſpring up in you, in which Seed your Souls felt ſome Touchings of that *heavenly Life* and *Joy*, which, for the Time, exceeded all Things that this World could afford: And whenſoever you come to feel this refreſhing Dew upon your Souls, then take heed, and wait ſingly in the Senſe of it, keep your Eye to the Joy that is now ſet before you in CHRIST JESUS, the Seed; for if you let your Minds wander, and your Eyes gad abroad, there are Objects on every Hand to lead you out from your Soul's Beloved, and to bring you to defile your Hearts, and make your ſelves an unfit Place of Reſidence for him who is holy and pure, and will not dwell, nor take Delight in a polluted Temple; but will withdraw himſelf, as he did from *Iſrael* of old, and from their Temple, when it was polluted and prophaned: And beſides, when your Minds have taken hold of any of the corruptible Things of this changeable World, there will preſently kindle a deſiring, longing and luſting after the Enjoyment of thoſe Things, though contrary

trary to the Will of God; and then next, the Reasoner and Consulter gets up in thee, and starts a Question, "May not I enjoy the Lord and this? May not I "keep in the Way of Truth, and yet do this or that "Thing which my Heart desireth? And though it "be not perfectly according to the Truth made mani-"fest in me; yet I will have my Will, my Lust, my "Desire satisfied but this one Time, and that is not "much, *saith the Consulter*; and this is but a small "Matter; there be others that do greater Things "than this;" and such like Reasonings enter the Mind, and this grieves and vexeth that good and righteous tender Spirit that moved in thee, and brings a Weight and Oppression upon the pure Spirit in thee; and that withdraws itself again from thee, in which thy *Light* did arise unto thee, and so a Night comes upon thee; for where the Serpent can bring any to make a Question of obeying the *Truth*, he is as ready to frame an Answer, as to beget the Question: but his Answer always comes with a Liberty and Perswasion to *disoby*, as it did by *Eve* in the Beginning; and when Transgression is finished, then Death enters upon thee with its dark Power, and manifold Sorrows pierce thy poor Soul: Though the Fruit was desirable to be eaten, yet now it is eaten, thou canst not come at Life, to eat of that too, though thou desirest it; but art driven out, and kept out with a *flaming Sword, that turns every Way against thee.* And here is now a Ground laid for Doubts and Questionings of a higher Nature than before, to arise in thee; for before, thou doubtest of the *Truth* itself, whether it were the *Truth*; but now having tasted of it, and received a Convincement of it, and yet let forth thy Mind from it after other Lovers, and thy Ears after the Voice of the Adultress, and so caused the pure *Light* to withdraw from thee, through thy Rebellion: Now thou desirest thou mightest but see again what thou hast seen, and feel again what thou hast felt, but doubtest and fearest that thou shalt never see, nor feel, nor enjoy the like again; and now thou wishest, Oh that thou hadst stood in the Cross to thy own Will, and

that

that thou hadſt denied thy ſelf, that thou mighteſt not thus have loſt the Sight and Senſe of thy Soul's Beloved. And now thou ſee'ſt, by woeful Experience, whence Doubts and Fears, and Sorows do ariſe, even by thy joining with the Enemy, who brings forth Reaſons againſt thy Obedience to the *Light*; And therefore now hearken to that which remains in thee, though *Darkneſs* and *Sorrow* do encompaſs thee; yet there is ſomething remains, which gives thee a Senſe of thy State and Condition, and makes thee to know thy Loſs and Want: Hear the Voice of this, and this will humble thee, and bring thee into true Brokenneſs of Heart, and Contriteneſs of Spirit; and as thou comeſt to know that State, then thou haſt ſomething to offer to the LORD of his own preparing, which will be far more acceptable to him than a multitude of Words, and Performances, and Duties, ſo called; and as thou, in the true Lowlineſs of Mind, doſt come before the LORD, and offer'ſt up this Offering, GOD will hear in Heaven, and will anſwer the Cry of the poor and needy Soul, that cannot be ſatisfied without his Preſence; and he will remember his Mercies of old (which never fail) for his Seed's ſake, which is not yet brought forth in thee: And when GOD doth again ſhine forth unto thee, and makes his Power known, thou muſt expect it to be in *Judgment*, becauſe of the Tranſgreſſion thou haſt gone into, that he may conſume that in thee which led thee into the Sin, from his pure Law, which is *Light*; for *Sion* is *Redeemed by Judgment*: And therefore take heed, leſt thou be offended at his Appearance; take heed that thou limit not the Holy One; but if his Appearance be with more Sharpneſs and Bitterneſs to the carnal Part than before, it is but juſt it ſhould be ſo, *it is the* LORD, *let him do what he will*, he ſees more Cauſe now than before, by how much more thou haſt ſinned againſt his Goodneſs, but bow to his Judgments, *Bear his Indignation*, (as *Micah* ſaid) *becauſe thou haſt ſinned againſt him*, Mic. vii. 9.

And as thou yieldeſt to his righteous Judgment, thou wilt know the coming to the midſt of them, in which *the Mercy is remembered* and made manifeſt; and there-

fore the Hasty and Impatient, that fly the Judgment as soon as it begins a little to apear in them, they never find the true Deliverance, but get Ease another Way, which lasteth but for a Moment; but they who come to know a thorough Work wrought in their Earth, and the Floor throughly purged, they come to know the true and lasting Peace to their immortal Souls.

And although this is not obtained by Ease and Liberty to the carnel Mind, which must die, yet the End crowns all that hold out to it, they are the saved Ones, as CHRIST said, *Mark* xiii. 23. And they find the returning with Sheaves, as the Prophet said, *Psal.* cxxvi. 5, 6. "They that sow in Tears shall reap in Joy: They "went forth *(said he)* with Weeping, and bearing pre- "cious Seed, but they shall return with Joy, and bring "their Sheaves. And as CHRIST said, 'They that for- "sake Father and Mother, Wife and Children, House "or Lands, yea, or their own Lives for my Sake, "shall have an hundred Fold in this Time, and in the "World to come Life Everlasting.' Forsaking and Self denial have always been the Way to Life, and to true Blessedness, and is the Way unto this Day.

And therefore all you who have wandered in your own Ways, and have not yet learned to deny yourselves of what is contrary to the Witness of GOD in your selves, but have Desires, and those strong ones too, to keep and hold that still which the *Light* in you doth reprove, and yet have Desires of Life and Peace too; and so are in many Doubts and Straights about these Things. To you all, this is the Counsel of the LORD and the Cry of his pure Spirit "Come out of the *Babyloniſh* "Confusion of your own Thoughts, and touch not "that which is unclean, and the LORD will receive "you: And what GOD by his pure Spirit hath called *unclean*, let no Man presume to call *clean*, and to join to it, lest they be found fighting against GOD, and nourishing and keeping that alive which GOD hath appointed to die and be destroyed: Ye cannot serve two Masters, nor partake of the Table of the LORD and the Table of Devils. Oh! feed not that Birth that hungers after evil Things, and delights in them; *but*

what

what is for Famine, let it be famiſhed; and what is for the Sword, let the Two-edged Sword, that goeth out of the Mouth of the faithful and true Witneſs, cut it down. Rev. i. 16. and iii. 14. And ſo thou may'ſt ſee the Giants in the Land ſlain before thee by One that is mighty to deliver, and to bring thee out of this ſpiritual *Egypt* with a high Hand: But this thou canſt not come to witneſs but by diligently following him; and if thou willingly yieldeſt to his gentle Drawings, when thou feeleſt them in thy Heart, thou wilt find them to be effectual and profitable to thy Soul; and the more thou followeſt him, the more thou wilt feel his Goodneſs break in upon the for thy Encouragement, and the leſs thou wilt doubt of his Love and Mercy in leading thee ſtill farther, even unto the End, and unto that Reſt which will ſatisfy thy Soul.

Therefore lay aſide all Conſultations that are againſt thy *Obedience* to the Gift of God in thy Heart, which reproves Sin in thee, and give not Way to vain and needleſs Doubts about it; but as thou findeſt that thou haſt been condemned and judged in thy diſobeying of it, now try and prove, whether by taking up thy daily Croſs, and obeying of it in thy Words and Actions, and in all Things, if thou do'ſt not find the Anſwer of ſweet *Peace* and *Joy*; and when thou ſhalt find it ſo, then will there be no more Room for Doubts and Queſtionings againſt thy obeying of it; but as any Queſtions or Doubts do ariſe in thee, or ſhall be caſt in thy Way by any without thee, thou wilt feel the Anſwer of it in thy ſelf to thy Refreſhing, and ſo thou wilt come to witneſs the effectual Operation of it daily in thy Soul, to work thy Change and Tranſlation out of thy ſelf into it ſelf, and ſo thou wilt come, not only to know the *Light* in thee, (for that one may do and periſh, *For this is the Condemnation, that* Light *is come and not loved*;) but thou wilt know that thou art in the *Light*, and walkeſt there with God, and in the holy Fellowſhip, where thou feeleſt the Lord near thee in his *Light*, and his Reward is with him: And ſo coming to walk and dwell in the *Light*, thy Converſation is now in Heaven, as the Saints of old was, and thy

Unity is witneſſed *with the Father and the Son*, as theirs was, who ſaid, *If we walk in the* Light *as he is in the* Light, *they had Fellowſhip with him; and if any ſaid they had Fellowſhip and walked in Darkneſs* (which all Sinners do, for Sin is the Work of it) *ſuch*, they ſaid, *were Lyars: And ſuch as walk in the* Light, *as he is in the* Light, *ſuch come to know the Blood that cleanſeth and waſheth from the Sin, and from all Unrighteouſneſs*. And ſuch as feel this Work wrought in them, are brought into ſuch a Knowledge of the Blood of CHRIST, that they need not doubt about it, nor have they Occaſion to raiſe a Queſtion, *where it is*, or *what it is*, or what the *Efficacy* of it is; for having the Work and Witneſs of the Blood in them, this forthwith reſolves all Doubts that would ariſe; and ſo likewiſe thoſe that come to know the *Light* in all Things to be their Guide to lead out of Darkneſs, and Sin, and Imperfections, and to bring into the Innocent and Blameleſs Converſation which becometh Saints, and ſo come to know their Footſteps directed before the LORD, ſuch have done doubting and queſtioning about *Perfection*; for ſuch ſee, that which is *perfect* to be come, and they from the Belief which they have of attaining it, are labouring to conform themſelves unto that Rule, and endeavouring after it; not as the carnal Profeſſors, who ſay, they labour after a Conqueſt over their Sins, with a Belief they ſhall never attain it while they live; but they ſo run that they may attain, and have the true Hope in them, which they that have, are purifying themſelves as he is pure, that is their Hope; as *John* ſaid, *He that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himſelf as* GOD *is pure*, that ſo, *Even as he was in this preſent World, ſo they may be alſo*: And ſo here the Subſtance will come, and will cauſe the Shadow to flee, and will anſwer all thy Doubts and Queſtions far beyond what Argument can do.

And again, the many Doubts and Diſputations that have ariſen about the *Reſurrection*; as thou comeſt to be faithful in the daily Croſs, that doth ſlay, and crucify that Nature in thee that hath reſiſted the *Truth*, and held the Soul in Bondage; as that comes to dye, and

to

to be buried down in the true Baptiſm into CHRIST's Death, thou wilt feel the *Pure* to ſpring up in thee, and thou wilt be made a Partaker of the *new Life*, and the *true Reſurrection*, which is CHRIST, and all that are in him are in the *Reſurrection*, and in the *Life*; for he ſaid, *I am the* Reſurrection *and the* Life, *he that believeth on me, though ye were dead, yet ſhall ye live*; and they that live to GOD, in the Spirit of his SON, have Part in the *firſt Reſurrection*, which whomſoever come to witneſs, the ſecond Death hath no Power over them, but they come to know the Thing as it is *in* JESUS, and their Doubts are all anſwered about that alſo; for he that knows a Death and Reſurrection after this manner, *to be dead to Sin, and to be riſen with* CHRIST JESUS *in the new Life*, even while they are in this earthly Tabernacle, before it be diſſolved, ſuch will never queſtion their Appearing at the Judgment Seat of GOD after it is diſſolved, but do believe it with Joy and Gladneſs, and have a fervent Hope concerning the *Reſurrection* of the Dead, and have their Expectation unto GOD in that Matter, that he will, according to his Promiſe, raiſe them up at the laſt Day, and will give unto every Seed his own Body, even as pleaſeth him; and the Creature is not careful then about ſuch fooliſh Queſtions and Doubts, as to enquire *what manner of Body* GOD *will give them?* but leaves it to the LORD, in full Faith, that he will raiſe them up, according to the Scriptures: And ſo here all thy Doubts will fly away, and are anſwered with that that was before them, as it comes to rule in the Creature; and Death, that is the Root and Ground of them, comes to be ſwallowed up in the Victory of the Life.

And ſo as thou feeleſt thy Part in this *Reſurrection*, all the Doubts and Fears of thy own Condition will be anſwered effectually, which cannot otherwiſe be anſwered, but by that good Spirit of GOD that ſtrives with thee, which, when it doth prevail with thee, and thou becomeſt ſubject to it, then it witneſſeth for thee; for that there is a State in which there is a Danger of falling away, thy daily Experience teacheth thee to thy

Sorrow;

Sorrow; and beſides CHRIST ſaid, "Every Branch in "me that beareth not Fruit, my Father taketh away;" and the many Examples in Scripture of them that departed from the Faith, and made Shipwrack of it, and turned with the Dog to the Vomit, and the Sow to the Mire, doth ſufficiently prove it; and if thou doſt ſtand, it is by Faith, and thou muſt take heed, and ſo may'ſt thou come to the Crown, and Seal, and Aſſurance, and an Eſtabliſhment in the Kingdom, where thou ſhalt no more go forth, but ſhalt have thy Soul's Deſire anſwered.

And when thou comeſt to know this State, and to receive this White Stone, that hath the Name within, thou wilt then be without Doubt or Fear, given up in the Will of GOD to do and to ſuffer all Things, according to his bleſſed Will: And here is the true and perfect Reſt to thy Soul, whoever thou art, that art now labouring in the Iron Furnace of thy own Thoughts and Doubts, in which the more thou giveſt thy ſelf up thereto, the darker thou art, and the fuller of Doubts; for they will beget and multiply one another, and the more thou reaſoneſt againſt obeying GOD's Witneſs in thy Heart, the leſs able thou art to obey it, but the little Strength that GOD gives thee, thou *conſulteſt* it away, and then when thou would'ſt be ſtrong, thou becomeſt feeble; and when thou would'ſt in ſome Meaſure obey, thy own *Conſultation* ſtands in the Way, and hinders thee; and the more thou increaſeſt in Knowledge in this State, the more thou increaſeth thy Sorrow and Condemnation; ſo that ſometimes thou art ready to wiſh thou hadſt never known ſo much of *Truth*; and ſometimes wiſheſt, "thou "kneweſt more concerning ſuch a Point, *or* ſuch a "Doctrine, *or* ſuch a Scripture, *or* ſuch a Myſtery," and art apt to think, becauſe thou art yet ignorant in ſome things relating to Truth, "therefore thou art "the more excuſable if thou be *diſobedient*." But alas! poor Soul, conſider, the Way to know *more* is to be obedient to a *little*, which thou haſt received, and then that Miſt and Fog of thy own Unfaithfulneſs, will vaniſh away from before the Eye of thy Mind; for

for it is that, which hinders good Things from thee, and makes thee go daily with a Burthen upon thy Shoulders, and a Guilt upon thy Conſcience, and thou canſt not, in no caſe of thy Neceſſities, come before the LORD with an open Face, but art covered ſtill with thine own Iniquities; and in this State thou knoweſt neither *Sabbath*, nor *New Moon*, nor *Holy-day* to the LORD; but all Labour, Toil and Travel, and Weariſomeneſs of Spirit, till many even come to wiſh an End of their Days, and yet are in great Fear that the End will be worſe too. Oh! how my Soul pities you, whoſe State this is, and I have a great Sympathy with your Sorrows, and in Bowels of tender Love, am I drawn forth to reach out a Hand to help you, as one that hath obtained Mercy to know Deliverance, and to witneſs the Way of it, and have the Teſtimony of GOD in my Heart, to witneſs forth the Coming of the SAVIOUR to the Poor and Needy Souls, to the relieving of them, and comforting of them; and my Soul's Deſire is, that your Bonds might be broken, and your Souls might eſcape.

But this I ſay, in the Name of the LORD to you all, "There is no Way for your Deliverance, but your "giving up in ſingle Obedience to that faithful and "true Witneſs of GOD which ſtirs and moves in thee "againſt thy Sins;" and therefore wait thou to feel thy Mind and Will ſubjected thereunto, that thou may'ſt feel thy ſelf to be one of thoſe willing People, in this the Day of GOD's Power; and ceaſe from thy Reaſonings againſt thy obeying the *Truth*, and from ſaying "thou canſt not, thou wanteſt Power, and "when GOD gives thee Grace, then thou wilt obey "*for theſe Sayings are in vain.*" For though it is true, none can obey the LORD but by his *Grace* and *Power* given unto them, yet he hath made his "Grace, even "that which bringeth Salvation, to appear unto all "Men," as in *Tit.* ii. 11. and it hath appeared unto thee, and in thee to whom I write, and is a Reprover in thee, and thou muſt turn to that that ſmites thee, and then thou turneſt to the *Grace of* GOD; for it is his *Grace* that ſtrives with thee, to lead thee out of the

Evil that it reproves in thee, and ſo out of the World that lies in the Evil, up to God from whence the *Grace* cometh; for whoſoever doth give up to the Drawings of the good Spirit of God that moves in them, and in Obedience thereto, do deny themſelves of their own Wills, and Luſts, and evil Deſires, and Pleaſures, ſuch want not Power, but feel him near them that works the Willingneſs firſt, and then the Deed according to his Pleaſure, and ſo the Glory comes alone to be his; and then thou knoweſt the Myſtery of the Croſs, and how it is *the Power of* God, which all that reject the Croſs complain for want of. And ſo long as thou liveſt in the *Croſs*, thou liveſt in the *Power*, and thy obeying is eaſy, and all Things are poſſible to thee through it; and as long as thou art daily dying to that which is corruptible, thou feeleſt the more Life, and Joy, and Pleaſure in that which is everlaſting, and thy Deſires grow more and more fervent after a full and perfect Enjoyment of it, in the pure Unity of Spirit: And thoſe Deſires growing ſtrong in thee, it grows a lighter Thing to thee to part with that which hinders, though it be thy *Boſom Sins*, thy *Dalilahs* and *Darlings*, yet all muſt go for the Love thou haſt to *Truth*; and ſuch only as have this Love, and continue in it, are counted worthy to be Heirs of the Kingdom of God; for ſo long as any thing be hugged and loved beſides the Lord, if the Lord ſhould manifeſt his Love to thee, thou would'ſt play the Harlot, and abuſe his Mercies, and cleave to thy old Lovers, as *Iſrael* of old did that was after the Fleſh: And therefore think it not ſtrange to be brought through manifold Trials, that thereby thou may'ſt be purged and prepared as a Bride for the true Huſband, Christ Jesus; for there are many that deſire Acquaintance with him, but are not fitted for him; they muſt be waſhed firſt, and trimmed firſt, and muſt put off the vile Raiment firſt, and muſt come to know the white Linnen put on. And while this Work is doing, What need of Patience and Quietneſs of Spirit is there! What need of Subjection to the Workings of that holy Spirit in all Things! That thou may'ſt not be ſetting Limits and Bounds to that which

muſt bound and limit thee in all Things; nor ſay in thine Heart, "If my Trials were but ſo, or my Exerciſes "ſo or ſo, I could then bear them;" but rather ſubmit in all Things, willingly to do and ſuffer, and to be tried and exerciſed, even as it pleaſeth the LORD to order, or ſuffer thee to be tried; and in all his Dealings ſay, with the good Man, "It is the LORD, let him do what he will with thee:" And whoſoever gives up thus to him, though he ſlays them, yet ſhall they live; though he wounds them, yet he will heal them again. Therefore learn *Patience* and *Stillneſs of Mind*, for by taking Thought thou canſt add nothing in this Work. I remember *Iſrael* of old, who were commanded *to ſtand ſtill, to ſee the Salvation of* GOD *in their greateſt Straights*, and they were a Figure unto thee: And now in the *Light* read thy Figure, and wait for the Subſtance, the true Seed, that it may bring forth Peace and Reſt to thy immortal Soul, and may ſet up Righteouſneſs in thy Earth; which is that I travel after, on the Behalf of all diſtreſſed and afflicted Souls every where, to whom I am a Friend and Well-wiſher, as one knowing their Trials, Straights, Doubts, and Beſettings; and alſo, thro' the rich Love of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, do witneſs the delivering, anſwering and ſatisfying Life, made manifeſt and revealed in its own eternal Light, *which lighteth every Man*; and in true Deſire that you may all know the ſame, and in Diſcharge of my Duty towards GOD and my Generation, have I ſent forth this Word of *Counſel* and *Exhortation*, and do remain in my Reſt with the LORD, being thus far clear of the Blood of all Men, whether they hear or forbear; and though in Bonds for the Goſpel Sake, yet the LORD's Free-man, waiting in Patience and full Aſſurance for *Sion*'s full Redemption.

Ipſwich Goal,
this 3d Month 1668.

Known by the Name,

STEPHEN CRISP.

AN

INVITATION

FROM THE

SPIRIT of CHRIST.

COME unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, come unto me and find Reſt; I, even I, am he that comforteth *Sion*; I am he that preacheth Liberty to the Captives; Oh! come unto me, ſtay not; I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; I am he, and there is no other; I came out from the Father into the World, that it might be reconciled up unto GOD through me; I am the good Shepherd, that am now come to gather the Outcaſts of *Iſrael*, and to bring home unto GOD the loſt Sheep, that the Diſperſed of *Judah* may now return, and the Seed of *Abraham* may be brought into me, in whom the Redemption is, even plenteous Redemption for all that will hear and turn in hither. Oh! all ye Scattered of the Flock, my Voice is to you that have not found Reſt to your Souls; now hearken diligently to hear my Voice, and feel my Words of Life; for now the Time is come, that the Seed that hath long lain in the Death ſhall hear my Voice, and they that hear ſhall live, and ariſe out of the Death, and I will give them Life.

Oh! come unto me, my own, my Beloved before the Foundation of the World, come, and ſtay not; I have long waited for you, my Locks are wet with the Drops of the Night, and you have wearied me with waiting for you; long have I knocked at the Door of your Hearts, calling to Repentance, and no Man

 regarded;

regarded; now the Slothful would not ariſe, that I might come in, and take up my Abode with and in my own, and refreſh them with Waters of Life; but now am I come, who am the Bridegroom and the Biſhop of the Soul, with my alluring Terms.

Come, Oh my Friends! hearken my Beloved, let me not be denied; open the Door of thy hard Heart, and let me not ſtand waiting any longer: Behold, I have Honour for all them that follow me, and Crowns of Life for all that will receive me.

Come unto me, my Lambs, I have prepared my Supper, I have made in this Mountain a Feaſt of Wines on the Lees, of fat Things full of Marrow; all Things are now ready: Come in unto me, I am the Bread of Life, I am the hidden Manna, I come to ſave Men's Lives. Come all ye that are weary with the Burthen of your Sins, I am the Lamb ſlain from the Foundation of the World, I come to take away the Sin of the World; I am the Root of *Jeſſe*, and the Off-ſpring of *David*; the bright and Morning Star: I am he that opens and none can ſhut, and ſhuts and none can open: I have Power to forgive Sins on Earth.

Come, ceaſe from the Evil of your Doings, learn of me to do well, and then we will reaſon together, and though thy Sins have been as Scarlet, they ſhall then be as white as Snow; for I come to finiſh Tranſgreſſion, and make an End of Sin, and bring in the Everlaſting Righteouſneſs of God. Therefore hear, Oh ye Scattered of the Flock, that are yet in the miry Clay, covered over with the thick Cloud of your Sins; Oh! remain not in the Filth now, continue no longer with the Fleſh-pots in the Houſe of Bondage, for I am come to condemn Sin in the Fleſh, and deſtroy the Works of the Devil, that you may find Redemption in me, and be waſhed from your Filthineſs, and cleanſed from your Sins.

Wherefore hear, all ye that are far from Righteouſneſs, behold, I have Gifts for the Rebellious, my Hand is ſtretched forth: Oh ye ſimple Ones! come unto me and learn pure Wiſdom; and ye Fools be of an underſtanding Heart. Oh, why will you die, O Houſe of

of *Iſrael!* Have I any Pleaſure at all that the Wicked ſhould die? Turn you, turn you, now I do call. Oh ye hard Hearted! wherefore do you hide your ſelves from me, and dig deep, to hide your Counſels from me? Why do ye run always aſtray? Oh! what ſhall I do unto you that I have not done? And yet do ye ſtill go on in the Evil of your Ways! When will you once return? Oh *Jeruſalem!* Wilt thou not be made clean? When ſhall it once be? Oh! I have ſeen your Abominations, and am wearied with your Sins; and yet have ye not regarded. Oh! now it is high Time to conſider thy Ways, and return from the Evil of thy Doings, leſt thou be ſhut out for Ever.

And all ye, my dear Ones, that have long waited for me, behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, ſaith CHRIST the SON of GOD; and I will open to you the hidden Treaſure of my Father, and make known his Will to you; and I will remove off the Burthen, and circumciſe your Hearts.

Behold, I come, ſaith CHRIST, and I will open the Priſon-door, and raiſe the Priſoner out of the Pit, and bring Deliverance to the Captive, and refreſh the Plant of my Father's planting, and nouriſh the tender Grape, which the Subtilty hath hurt; and I will bind up the Broken, and reſtore unto the Mourners the Years of Joy and Comfort: And I will be unto you a ſure Foundation, a preſent Help in time of Need; and I will bring back the Scattered, and they ſhall not return, but fear the LORD GOD of their Fathers in my Mountain of Holineſs, and they ſhall walk in the Way of Peace, and in the Paths of Righteouſneſs, where the Unclean ſhall not paſs over, nor the wild Beaſt of the Field ſhall not come, but the Ranſomed of my Father, ſaith CHRIST the SON of GOD.

Therefore hear, all ye my Brethren, and conſider, all ye my Friends, for I am come, who am the ſure Foundation, and the Corner-ſtone, the Light, the True Light of the World, and the Life of Man, and the Everlaſting Covenant of the Father, and the Power of GOD, and the Wiſdom of the Father: By me Kings

reign, and the Princes of *Israel* ſhall now rule in Equity; for behold, I am come, even he that you have long waited for, and there is not another; come learn of me, I am meek, I am lowly, I am the Light, low in the Heart, I am the living Miniſter, ſaith CHRIST, the Son of the Father's Love, and the Light of the World; I change not, but remain a Prieſt for ever, a living Miniſter of Life within the Veil, miniſtring Life unto the Spirit in Priſon.

HUMPHRY SMITH.

FINIS.